

LYRE GODS OF THE BRONZE AGE MUSICAL KOINE

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Abstract

That the Late Bronze Age cultural koine included a musical dimension is suggested by the Mesopotamian and Hurrian/Ugaritic musical tablets. This paper presents a selective survey and analysis of evidence for a parallel phenomenon, the deification of lyres/harps, which seemingly originated in late third millennium Mesopotamia and spread abroad in the second. Deified lyres are considered as both a ritual reality and an inducement to poetic elaboration by the same poet-priests who used them; much of the textual evidence thus represents remnants of a professional repertoire. At the same time, the motif also commonly centers on kingship, which is explained in terms of the dual office of priest-kingship; as such, there is some involvement of the deified lyre with the ritual of sacred marriage (*hieros gamos*). Relevant material comes from Ugarit and Cyprus, especially in the figure of Kinyras. In Greek evidence, 'lyre heroes' like Orpheus, Amphion, Cadmus and Linus are seen as late mythological derivatives of the pattern, Archaic survivals of Mycenaean ritual-poetics. Finally, Old Testament evidence for musical prophecy is considered in light of the foregoing.

The Mesopotamian Background

Between 1960 and 1969 a small corpus of cuneiform musical texts was discovered and published by Anne Kilmer and the late Oliver Gurney of Oxford.¹ Widely scattered in space and time, these tablets come from Ur, Nippur, Sippar, Assur, and Ugarit, and range from the Old Babylonian period until the end of the cuneiform scribal tradition. Remarkably, however, they use a uniform body of terms and concepts; thus, although each text was more or less damaged, a coherent tuning system could be reconstructed. In one tablet was found a list of canonical string names, arranged around a central string. Moreover, this is a bilingual lexical text, providing Sumerian

¹ For an introduction to these texts, see Kilmer in RIA 8, 463-482 with further literature; for the history of the system's reconstruction, Kilmer 1971.

equivalents of the standard Akkadian terms. Since some of these are also known from the Shulgi hymns (Krispijn 1990, *passim*), we may safely retroject the musical system to at least the Neo-Sumerian period, and perhaps still earlier in the third millennium on the strength of musical representations.

The tablets prove Mesopotamian knowledge of the complete heptatonic, or seven-pitch, scale cycle. With words like 'heptatonic' the argument threatens to degenerate into technicalities. But the crucial point should be intelligible to anyone who has learned their *do re mi-s* from *The Sound of Music* or childhood lessons. With the exception of equal temperament, the Mesopotamian seven-note scales are no different to those on which the modern Western tradition is based. This is not to imply, of course, that the music which was made with these scales resembled our own in any other way.

The discovery has deep implications for ancient Greek music, since, according to the common opinion, established by Winnington-Ingram in 1936 and presupposed in all of the many recent works on the subject, such a cyclical conception of heptatony was achieved only in the later Classical period. I have argued elsewhere (Franklin 2002a; 2002b; forthcoming) for vestiges of this Mesopotamian system in the earliest layers of the Greek musical evidence, where it is intimately associated with the seven-stringed lyre, the most esteemed instrument of the Archaic aristocracy. This music probably continued palatial traditions, since seven-stringed lyres were already standard equipment in the Mycenaean palaces. These instruments show some degree of dependence on earlier Minoan models; note especially the resemblance between the lyre in the Pylos fresco to the instrument on the Hagia Triad sarcophagus.² It is probable, therefore, that the Minoans are a crucial missing link in the transmission of the Mesopotamian tradition.

The crucial point which rules out independent development is that both systems share a practical and conceptual emphasis on the central string.³ It is significant that most of the Greek evidence comes not from technical writers, whose concern is with the musical developments of the Classical period and later, but from Plato,

² Pylos: Lang 1969:79-80 and pll. 27, 125-126 (reconstructions by Piet de Jong). Hagia Triada: Paribeni (1908); Evans (1921-1936), 2.834-838. Cf. Younger 1998: 66-69 and plates 10-11.

³ The Greek sources, which have not yet been adequately studied, are collected in Franklin 2005:36 n. 74.

Aristotle, the Aristotelian *Problems* and several later sources, all of whom may be supposed to continue the inherited customs of the Archaic elite. We are faced with the curious predicament, therefore, that Aristoxenus, the first extant musicographer and traditionally the great early witness, actually represents Greek music in a very advanced state.

The same approach, heptatonic music focused on a central string also appears in the famous Hurrian hymns with musical notation from Ugarit.⁴ Here the Mesopotamian system was taken over by the fourteenth century at the latest (the date of these hymns), but more probably this should be pushed back to the early second millennium, since the garbled Akkadian terms which are employed as notation suggest a period of oral transmission of some centuries.⁵ It is not known exactly how this system may be converted to music. But an analysis of the relative frequency of string names shows that the central one does indeed feature prominently. Besides their value as technical evidence, the Hurrian hymns are equally important for showing the adoption of the Mesopotamian art beyond the Tigris and Euphrates. This was doubtless part of the classical education which spread abroad in the second millennium, undergone by scribes, priests and other learned professionals, and to some degree aristocracy and royalty. The Hurrian hymns prove that this was so of the Mitannian priests; and that it was also true locally in Ugarit is suggested by Akkadian instrument names in Canaanite lexical texts from the same period (for which Caubet 1987; 1996). Music technical documents are still unknown from Egypt or Hattusha, but the establishment of scribal schools among the Hittites makes a parallel adoption plausible. The Mesopotamian system might be seen as a sort of musical *lingua franca*, providing raw material for the creation of local syncretic artforms. In second millennium Mesopotamia the primary venues for such music were palace and temple (Hartmann 1960, *passim*), and the same was doubtless true abroad. Thus, despite the huge geographical range involved, the diffusion of this artform could take place in the same small world

⁴ For the Hurrian musical texts, Laroche (1968); for the notation system, Kilmer in *RLA* 8, 463-482, with further bibliography on the many proposed decipherments.

⁵ As pointed out by Hagel 2005a. This would place the Hurrian adoption of Mesopotamian diatony to c.1500 at the latest. In fact, it would not be surprising if the Canaanites and Hurrians knew the system already c.1800 when it first appears in Sumerian-derived Babylonian texts. For music in Ugarit generally, cf. Caubet 1987; Caubet 1996.

which hosted diplomatic marriages, the sharing of 'scientific' knowledge and religious thought (such as exorcism, magic, and divination), the translation of literary classics, and the circulation of luxury goods.

Here I shall examine a cross-cultural phenomenon which marks the intersection of this artform with the various ritual purposes which it accompanied. This begins from the divinization of lyres as part of a temple's sacred equipment. In Mesopotamia these instruments, which in texts are written with the divine determinative *dingir*, could receive, like gods, offerings of animal sacrifice, spices, oil, fruit, etc.⁶ The practice is best attested from pre-Sargonic times down through the Old Babylonian period—just when the musical system appears as canonical in the scribal tradition. That the system was formulated in terms of stringed instruments strongly suggests that chordophones set a tonal standard for the coordinated performance of various ensemble-types. They were thus essential for the proper execution of religious ritual, and it is this which ultimately justifies their deification.

Since gods have divine powers and can perform in mythological narratives, this cultic practice provided an impulse for poetic elaboration, the remains of which show several ramifications. The Lyre Gods' chordophonic super-powers would be based, naturally, upon the ritual functions of the instruments in question. From the evidence to be considered, these duties included prophecy, healing, purification, city foundation rituals, and generally the establishment or restoration of Order. The effective mechanism of the wonder-working lyre was probably that the orderly relations of its tunings were believed capable of inducing or restoring, via sympathetic magic, a similar state in the natural or social world.

In Mesopotamia the basic motif is best seen in the Gudea Cylinders. These Sumerian texts date to around 2100 and were composed to celebrate the building of a temple to Ningirsu by Gudea, King of Lagash.⁷ The composition blends material and ritual documentation with a vividly imagined mythological scene, in which Ningirsu takes up his seat in the new temple, accompanied by the functionaries of his divine court. Cylinder A records that,

⁶ Offerings: Galpin 1936:65 f.; Hartmann 1960:53 and n. 3, 61 f.; Nougayrol 1968:59; Rashid 1984:13, 140; Kilmer in RIA 8, 464b; 466. For offerings to the *balag* specifically, see further the numerous references in (Sjöberg 1984-), s.v. *balag* 1.1.1-2. For the Hittite *giš d Inanna*, see below n. 31.

⁷ Text: Thureau-Dangin (1925) = TLC 8; translation: Falkenstein 1935, 137 ff.; Kramer 1969:26 ff. For the pantheon and history of Lagash, Falkenstein 1966.

prior to construction, Gudea secured the god's good will through the dedication of a chariot, an offering-ritual which took the form of a procession, to the accompaniment of 'his beloved lyre (*balag*) . . . his famous melodious instrument, his tool of (good) counsel' (Gud. A 6.24 f.). I should note here that the identification of the *balag* instrument is controversial, but during the UR III period almost certainly designated a type of stringed instrument.⁸ In Cylinder B we learn that the *balag* itself was given as a sacred offering to the temple. This time, however, the narrative becomes mythological, the instrument is personified as a god, and we witness his official appointment as temple singer (*nar*). 'To have the sweet-toned instrument, the *tigi*-harp, correctly tuned, to place the music of the *algar* and *mirutum* . . . was his beloved bard/musician . . . going about his duties for the lord Ningirsu'.⁹

One of these duties was to provide some kind of 'counsel' (*ad-gi₄*) for Ningirsu. The meaning of this word is clarified by how its relations are used elsewhere in the compositions. In one episode, Gudea has a dream in which he sees a woman who holds a pen as she 'consults' an astronomical tablet—a sort of omen within an omen.¹⁰ Considerable external evidence confirms that *ad-gi₄* typically describes advice or responses from divine sources, and the word appears several times as an epithet of a temple itself.¹¹ The *balag* as a counsellor is known from several other texts, which shows that this aspect of the instrument was not unique to the Gudea

⁸ The old question of the *balag*'s identity cannot be addressed here. Suffice it to say that, while Black 1991:28 n. 39 rightly pointed out the tenuous basis for an identification with the harp, this does not mean that the interpretation 'drum' should automatically hold sway. Crucial is the evidence of the *Ebla Vocabulary*, contemporary with the period in question (c.2300), in which *balag* is equated with *kinnâru* (VE 572: see Pettinato 1982, 264; cf. Toniatti in *RIA* 8, 482b; Kilmer in *RIA* 6, 573b), which Black was "at a loss" to explain. It must be stated, however, that the following discussion of Sumerian evidence depends on this still disputed point.

⁹ Gud. B.10.9-15 (translation after Jacobsen 1987 and one by Stephen Langdon in the margin of his copy of Thureau-Dangin 1907, held in the Sackler Library, Oxford). Cf. 15.20-22, 18.22-19.1: 'Ushumgalkamma took its stand among the *tigi*-harps, the *alu*-lyres roared for him like a storm' (trans. Jacobsen 1987:441). For *tigi* as a type of chordophone, see n. 31.

¹⁰ Gud. A 4.23-5.1, 5.22-25. Elsewhere the text identifies another of Ningirsu's counsellors, Lugalsisa (literally 'The King Who Sets Straight'), as 'Vice Regent' of the temple, responsible for keeping the city in good repair, the king in good health, and for confirming his throne (Gud. B 8.20-22).

¹¹ For the last point, cf. George 1993: 65 f. In some cases, then, it may be possible to suppose that 'house of counsel' means 'house of the counselling lyre/lyre-priest'.

temple, but was common to those that were equipped with a *balag*—i.e., most or all.¹²

Like a superhero ducking into a nearby phonebooth, in the Gudea Cylinders the *balag* moves easily between instrument of musical counsel, and the divine bard who gives counsel in his song. Given this plasticity, a natural variation might envision the god himself as playing the divine instrument, and taking counsel from it directly. These two versions, in their turn, seem to echo a terrestrial pattern of kings and priest-kings who either hearken to their bards, or who play the lyre themselves. The first figure is familiar from many works of art, such as the LBA Canaanite ivory plaque from Megiddo. The second might be suggested by the eighth-century lyre-player seals from North Syria and/or southern Anatolia. Real or mythical examples of the lyre-playing king include Shulgi of Ur, King David, Kinyras of Cyprus, Amphion and Cadmus of Thebes, Achilles, and Torrhebus of Lydia. It is worth noting here a tradition preserved in Himerius (fourth century AD) that Polycrates, tyrant of Samos in the sixth century, employed the poet Anacreon as tutor for his son, ‘under whom the child strove for kingly virtue by means of the lyre’ (*Or.* 29.22). I shall present now a selective survey and analysis of these gods, kings, priests, priest-kings and god-kings of the lyre and harp.

Kinyras: The West Semitic Evidence

The richest traces of the lyre-god pattern are preserved among the mythological remnants of Kinyras. A complex and elusive figure, Kinyras was a national symbol no later than the time of the *Iliad* (11.19-23), in which he is considered king of the island. As the eponymous ancestor of the Kinyradai, the priest-guild at the Greco-Phoenician temple of Aphrodite in Paphos, some scholars have seen Kinyras as a creation of the ninth century, when the Phoenicians established trading colonies at Kition and elsewhere.¹³ There are,

¹² SBH 110 no. 57:33; see Sjöberg (1984-), s.v. *ad-gi₄-gi₄* Bilingual 2. ‘Counsellor, Dragon of the Land’ also appears in a hymn to Ninurta: Sjöberg 1976:418 f., line 100. The divine *balag* is elsewhere attested for the temples of Baba, Enki and Nintu, as a possession of the gods Ninurra and Ningal, and is mentioned in other divine and royal hymns: Hartmann 1960:59, 61, 66 f.

¹³ Roscher *Lex.* s.v. Kinyras; Pauly-Wissowa s.v. Kinyras; Bunnens 1979:354-356. For the Phoenician expansion in Cyprus, Gjerstad 1979; Dupont-Sommer 1974; Bikai 1994; Karageorghis 1995.

to be sure, some interesting syncretic musical phenomena at this time, as witnessed, for example, by the remarkable series of symposium bowls (*paterai*) which originated in the Levant but soon inspired various local imitations throughout the Mediterranean and Near East.¹⁴ The originals contained, collectively, a stereotyped repertoire of motifs, one of which is a typical musical ensemble long known throughout the Near East, comprising lyres, double pipes and hand percussion. In examples made on Cyprus, and one found at Olympia, these stereotyped motifs persist, but in the musical scenes the West Semitic asymmetrical lyres are replaced by Hellenic instruments. While one may easily imagine a Phoenician craftsman making such changes for a single Hellenic patron,¹⁵ the occurrence of many such examples must be explained in larger terms. They should be seen in light of the orientalizing banquet style, inspired initially by the Phoenicians, which began its spread to the Aegean as early as the ninth century, when the first (imported) bowls are found on Crete and Euboea.¹⁶ It is now well known that the symposium was the principal stage for the personal poetry—monody often accompanied by the seven-stringed lyre—which was cultivated by the Archaic elite. The ‘Greek’ Cypriot *paterai* attest that the musical conventions of the Phoenician symposium were being adapted to Hellenic environments—though we cannot identify anything more technical than a change of performance context. A parallel case worth noting here is the 8th century reliefs from Karatepe. This site, which also attests the name of Mopsus, a seer of Greek mythology, presents a musical scene in which Aegean and West Semitic models exist side by side in the same relief—so that the difference is clearly intended.

There are good reasons, however, for supposing that the figure of Kinyras contains a Bronze Age nucleus. It remains the best explanation, for instance, of traditions that he was toppled from power by, or gave his daughter in marriage to, Achaean interlopers.¹⁷ Musical considerations also support this conclusion. Because he is

¹⁴ For these bowls generally, Markoe 1985; Matthäus 1985.

¹⁵ As Karageorghis 2000a. explains his no. 305.

¹⁶ Popham et al. 1988-1989; Popham 1995; Matthäus 1999-2000. Note, however, that the general appearance of the orientalizing symposium in the Aegean should be correlated with the Neo-Assyrian acme and the courtlife it inspired in Lydia: see Franklin (forthcoming).

¹⁷ Cf. Gjerstad 1944; Dussaud 1950; Baurain 1980:291-301.

described as a musical figure in some Greek sources, one etymology would derive his name from the West Semitic lyre, known from Ugaritic *kinnarum*, and Hebrew *kinnôr*.¹⁸ The *knr* was known among the Canaanites since at least the late third millennium, when it is attested in the *Ebla Vocabulary*. If this derivation of Kinyras is right the Kinyradai could then translate equally as ‘sons of Kinyras’, or ‘Sons of the Lyre’; and it has been further observed that this would parallel the typical West Semitic linguistic construction for the designation of a professional guild (i.e. **b^{ne} kinnûr*).¹⁹ Such musicians unions are already attested in the thirteenth century across the strait in Ugarit, including singers (probably) to the lyre or harp; one may also note here the biblical parallel of the Levites.

Now, a deified lyre takes its place in the so-called Ugaritic pantheon text, in which *knr* is translated by Akkadian ^{*dīngir.gis*} Ki-na-rum, ‘the divine lyre instrument’, alongside other cult objects and major divinities. Discovered in the temple district, this document was thought by its publishers to list those entities which were to receive sacrifice and offerings;²⁰ if this interpretation is right, it would parallel the Mesopotamian cult practice described above. If one accepts the usual equation of Alashia with Cyprus, Ugaritic texts and the archaeological record converge to attest close political and cultural relations between the island and mainland communities.²¹ Indeed,

¹⁸ So already Frazer 1914:52-56; Evans 1921-1936:2.837 f.; Astour 1967:139 n. 5; Nougayrol 1968:59; Bunnens 1979:355; West 1997:57. See further below. For Kinyras generally, Dussaud 1950; Baurain 1980; Baurain 1981; Cayla 2001.

¹⁹ West 1997:57. For Kinyras as the founder of Aphrodite’s temple at Paphos, and the Kinyradai, Pi. *Pyth.* 2.15-17; schol. Pi. *Pyth.* 2.27; Ptol. *Megalop. FG+H* 161 F 1; Tac. *Hist.* 2.3.2 f.; Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.14.3; Arnob. 4.24, 5.19; Clem. Alex. *Protr.* 2.13.4; Firmicus Maternus, *De errore* 10; Hsch. s.v. Κινυράδαι.

²⁰ For the Ugaritic guilds of temple singers (*srn*) and cymbalists (*mslm*), cf. Gordon 1956:140, 143; Heltzer 1982:137. Divine lyre in pantheon text: RS 20.24, line 31; see Nougayrol 1968:42-44, 59.

²¹ Alashia as Enkomi or Cyprus as a whole is widely accepted, but cf. Merrillees 1987. For Cypriot connections with Ugarit, Dussaud 1950:57-62; Masson/Masson 1983:36 f.; Karageorghis 2000b. This inclusion of Cyprus in the larger world of the Near East is confirmed for later periods by mythological variants which connect Kinyras with Cilicia, Syria/Assyria, and the Levantine coast; as king of Assyria: Hygin. *Fab.* 58, 242; king of Byblos: Strabo 16.2.18; son of Pharnake or Sandokos (in Cilicia), *Anth. Pal.* 9.236 (Demodocus); Apollod. *Bibl.* 3.14.3, Hsch. s.v. Κινύρας; *Suda* III 42.3, IV 326.24 Adler; and note the tradition that the prophetic arts of the Kinyradai were introduced from Cilicia by Tamiras: Tac. *Hist.* 2.3; Hsch. s.v. Ταμυράδαι; cf. Burkert 1992 < 1984, 52 f. Many genealogical variants connect Kinyras with the cities of Cyprus, as well as Smyrna and even the Athenian royal family: see sources collected in Baurain 1980, especially 280 ff.

the ‘Phoenician colony period’ in Cypriot history is probably better understood as a political reorientation than a cultural one. Thus immigrant Phoenicians, with their own version of the Canaanite *knr*, might well have encountered an Alashian cognate, both linguistic and musical. The figure of Kinyras, then, should be understood against the total environment of the Canaanites, whose musical identity is readily traceable back into the early second millennium—when, as mentioned above, their knowledge of the Mesopotamian diatonic system may also be presumed (see n. 5).

A remarkable fact, which reinforces the impression of great antiquity, is that the Greeks of the historical period, beginning with Homer, were apparently unaware of Kinyras’ ancient descent from the Canaanite instrument. The association of Kinyras with the *kinnôr* is not proposed until late in the Christian period (Eust. ad Hom. *Il.* 11.20). That such a retrospective etymology would have been the obvious derivation to make with knowledge of biblical writings, when *kinura* became the standard Greek rendering of the Hebrew word, has caused some scholars to reject the etymology.²² And yet it is quite probable that the *knr* was known to the Mycenaeans: tablets from Pylos (*DMG*², 554; Palmer 1963:371-372; Baurain 1980, 305 f.) attest *ki-nu-ra* in both secular and sacred contexts, one (PY Vn 865) the personal name of a ship-builder (*Kinyras*), the other (PY Qa 1301) may also be a personal name, but an office on a par with priest and priestess is equally possible (cf. PY Qa 1289, 1290, 1300)—a *kinyras*, ‘Lyre-Player’ of the palace and/or palace-shrine. Thus the *knr* takes its place alongside *lyra* (*ru-ra*, see n. 46) as one of only two names for this class of instrument known from Linear B—a remarkable state of affairs, since neither is known to Homer, who uses two completely different terms, *phorminx* and *kitharis*.

Sacred Marriage and Lamentation Singers

Mycenaean familiarity with the *knr* did not survive into the later mainstream of Aegean Greek vocabulary. The case was otherwise on Cyprus, however, judging from a local cult title of Apollo, *kenuristês* (‘kinyrist’) which appears in an oath-text found in the sanctuary of Aphrodite in Paphos (from the time of Tiberius, but showing

²² Rejection of Kinyras < *knr*, Brown (1965), 208; Chantraine (1968) s.v. κινύρα; cf. Baurain 1980:304.

a traditional formulation). This *epiklêsis* presupposes the verbal form *kinurizô*. This word was known to Zenodotus, the Hellenistic critic of Homer, who read it for the common *acheuô* ('I lament') in one passage of the *Iliad* (schol. Hom. *Il.* 9.612). The sense of lamentation also appears in the related forms *kinuromai* (= *kinurizô*) and *kinuros* ('plaintive'), found in fifth century drama and learned Alexandrian poetry. It is not clear whether these forms were borrowed from the Cypriot branch of epic or descended directly from Mycenaean usage independently of *kinura*. The dominant note of lamentation is remarkable, however, and must surely be related to the office of ritual lamentation performed by Near Eastern temple singers. This then was probably one duty of the Kinyradai (and perhaps of the *kinyras* of the Pylion tablet). But the association of *kenuristês* with Apollo surely puts as much emphasis on 'lyre' as 'lament', and with the early Phoenician influx it is probable that in no period was the *knr* unknown on the island.²³

The Kinyradai as lamentation singers accords well with the status and function of chordophones in Near Eastern temple music. Herodotus has a brief digression on the so-called Linus song which, he reports, was sung in Cyprus, Phoenicia, Egypt and elsewhere; he describes it as very ancient, and explicitly states that it followed the 'dying god' pattern. Lucian describes the mourning of women for Adonis in Byblos, where Kinyras was said to have founded a temple of Aphrodite.²⁴ Homer specifies that the Linus song was accompanied by the lyre (on the shield of Achilles), and in mythology Linus himself is portrayed as a lyrist. The Sumerian lamentation singer, the *gala*, sang to the *balag*, and here one should note that the late third-millennium *Ebla Vocabulary* identifies the *balag* with the *knr*.²⁵

All of this suggests that Kinyras reflects a Cypriot temple music tradition closely allied to that of the Near East, of which an important function was to accompany the various rituals of the sacred marriage cycle between King and Goddess which was practiced in various forms, and at various times and places, throughout the Near East.²⁶

²³ Apollo *kenuristês*: Cayla 2001:78-81. *Kinuros* and *kinuromai*: Liddell et al. 1940, s.vv.

²⁴ Linus song: Hom. *Il.* 18.569 ff.; Hdt. 2.79; Sapph. fr. 140b L-P. Lamentations for Adonis at Afqa: Lucian *De Dea Syria* 9; cf. Roscher *Lex.* s.v. Kinyras; Brown (1965), 198 ff.; Bunnens 1979:355.

²⁵ For the *gala*, Hartmann 1960:63. For the *Ebla Vocabulary*, see note 7.

²⁶ For Kinyras specifically, Frazer 1948:327-334; for the pattern generally Frazer 1906-1915 *passim* (*de mortuis nil nisi bonum*); Jacobsen in Frankfort et al. 1946:198-200;

A mythological memory of this might be found in the tradition that Kinyras was the lover of Aphrodite and father of Adonis, and it could shine light on the controversial tradition that temple prostitution was practiced in Paphos. Even in the Classical period Aphrodite Ourania was still correctly known by the Greeks to be a hypostasis of Phoenician Astarte (Hdt. 1.105; cf. Philo of Byblos *FGrH* 790 F 2). This goddess is, of course, closely linked to Mesopotamia via Babylonian Ishtar and Sumerian Inanna. Several Phoenician kings are known to have doubled as priests of Ishtar, and the same is likely to have been true in Ugarit.²⁷

But a golden age of this ceremony was third millennium Sumer, once again just the place and time that the Mesopotamian musical system appears in canonical form. Several kings of the Ur III period (late third millennium) are commemorated in hymns which describe the sexual union of the monarch, in the guise of the divine consort, with the goddess, whose part was probably played by a temple priestess, during the course of an actual ritual; by contrast, the later Babylonians and Assyrians seem to have adopted a more symbolic, less hands-on approach.²⁸ As with all Mesopotamian rites, music played an important part in the ceremony, during which an oracle was delivered to the King confirming his sacred office and predicting the fertility and general well-being of his people.²⁹ The king/god was probably imagined as hymning the goddess himself, and in some cases may actually have done so; at any rate, Dumuzi is said to do so in one version of the polymorphous cult narrative,

Frankfort 1948:286-294, stressing the “specifically different” over the “generically alike” as more valuable for understanding the different national mentalities; Gurney 1962; Kramer 1963; Kramer 1969, with 85 ff. for the Song of Solomon; cf. 132 f. for the idea of transmission to Anatolia, Greece, and Cyprus in connection with Adonis; Yamauchi 1973; Klein 1981, 32; Renger in *RIA* 4, 251-259 for cautions about enthusiastic earlier studies. Temple prostitution at Paphos: Frazer 1948:330; Karageorghis 1982:532. Baurain 1980:280-287 collects the evidence for Kinyras and Adonis (which he views as a later connection), without, however, discussing the *hieros gamos*.

²⁷ Ithobaal of Tyre, Tabnit and Eshmunazar of Sidon; see Bunnens 1979:356. For the institution in Ugarit, cf. Dussaud 1945:375.

²⁸ Frankfort 1948:330; Kramer 1969:63, 78, 100; Renger in *RIA* 4, 257 f.

²⁹ Frankfort 1948:318; Kramer 1963:496, 501-505; Kramer 1969:66; Renger in *RIA* 4, 255 f. For the oracle, TLB 2.2.41 f., 58 ff.; SRT 1.171-175; CT 42.4; cf. Renger in *RIA*, 256; Römer 1965:187. There are many representations of sexual intercourse accompanied by music, beginning from the ED I period; some of these may represent the sacred marriage with music, but in no case is this certain since the scenes can always be secular—and when the lute is shown, as it often is, this is the more likely explanation. See Cooper in *RIA* 4, 266-268.

and in others is described as approaching the goddess to the accompaniment of music.³⁰ It is also noteworthy that Adonis did not have his own shrine in Byblos, but was worshipped and lamented in the temple of the goddess; and the same was probably true of Dumuzi in Uruk (Frankfort 1948:288). These facts accord well with the identity of Kinyras as a musical and prophetic priest-King *resident* in the temple of Aphrodite. His name vividly supports what would any way be the natural supposition, that divine lyres or harps were regarded as necessary magical implements for these rituals of cosmic and civic regeneration. Thus in a Neo-Sumerian royal hymn which recounts the sacred marriage of Iddin-Dagan of Isin, Inanna is celebrated with the music of *algar*, *balag* and *tigi*—some certainly, and all probably, stringed instruments; and other considerations suggest a close connection between Inanna/Ishtar and chordophones, which might derive from their special use for love-songs, as we know from a Middle Assyrian song catalogue (VAT 10101).³¹

The Prophetic Lyre

Another Sumerian king who is documented as having performed in the sacred marriage rite was Shulgi of Ur, a figure of considerable

³⁰ Genouillac 1930: no. 97.11 ff.; CT XLII no. 13.60; Ni 9602 obv. col. ii.6 f., 15.

³¹ SRT 1.35-53 (*algar*, *balag*, drums), 79 (*tigi*), 204-207 (*algar*): see Römer 1965:128-208; Reisman 1973. For the *algar* as horizontal harp, Hartmann 1960:68 f. (agnostic); Spycket 1983:45; Duchesne-Guillemin 1969; Krispijn 1990:9 f.; as lyre, Lawergren/Gurney 1987:41 f. The *tigi* was long interpreted as a type of drum, but Krispijn 1990:3 f. has now made a very strong argument for a kind of chordophone; and note the Sumerian expression '*tigi-7*' (Castellino 1972:17; Kilmer 1984:75 n. 22), which might refer to heptatony, and so strings or at least the strings-based system of the musical tablets. In one text (TMH N.F. III no. 25 obv. 3 f.), Inanna sings a *tigi* song to Dumuzi. For strings as used in the procession and feast of the sacred marriage, cf. Hartmann 1960:68 f. Several stringed instruments are sacred to Ishtar in Hh VIIb 81-83 (*MSL* VI, p. 123 f.); cf. Lawergren/Gurney 1987:41. Important confirmation comes from Hittite sources, where the lyre (Hattic *zinar*, Akk. *zannaru*) is commonly rendered as 'the divine Inanna instrument' (^{giti} Inanna): Laroche 1955:72-74; Sjöberg 1965:64 f.; de Martino 1987; Güterbock 1995:58; Krispijn 1990:12. The majority of *balag* attestations come from Inanna-Dumuzi texts: see Hartmann 1960:65 and n. 2. For the connection between chordophones and love-songs, note the erotic representations mentioned in n. 100. Love-songs are the only genre (*irtu*) for which all seven diatonic tunings are explicitly attested in the Middle Assyrian catalogue text VAT 10101—a situation which is very suggestive for Archaic Greek lyric (Franklin 2002a:443; 2002b:698 f.; [forthcoming]). The Ugaritic *knr* is also found in this context (RS 24.245: see Nougayrol et al. 1968:558).

musical interest. It is in his self-praise hymns that we encounter the technical terms which allow us to suppose a Sumerian period for the Mesopotamian musical system. Shulgi vaunts his mastery of both music-especially that of chordophones-and the divinatory arts. He does not make an explicit link between the two, which are presented only as two branches of scribal knowledge.³² We have already seen, however, the figure of musical-counselor, or divine interpreter, in the Gudea texts. The same association seems reflected in the Sumerian proverb, ‘a city, their hymns; a kid, its extispicy’. Similarly, an obscure Sumerian ritual known as the ‘river ordeal’, a sort of trial by water, involved a judgement via music, a ‘decision, the holy song’.³³

Likewise, Kinyras was included among the prophets of Greek mythology, and in the historical period the Kinyradai executed this function at Paphos, one of their consultants being the Roman emperor Titus (Tac. *Hist.* 2.3 f.; Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 1.21). No source specifies that these oracles used the lyre; Tacitus refers only to animal entrails, while archaeological finds from children’s graves within the temple precinct attest the practice of astragalomancy.³⁴ And yet it seems significant that divination was entrusted to priests whose professional title reveals a fundamental connection with the instrument. One might well infer the presence of both music and prophecy behind Pindar’s description of Kinyras as ‘beloved of Apollo’ (*Pyth.* 15-17), or Apollo’s cult epithet *kenuristês* considered above.

The exchange of oracular consultations with the king of Alashia is attested in texts from Ugarit (see n. 21). There the *knr* was probably associated with the craftsman-god Kothar-wa-Hasis, who seems to have presided over both music and prophecy. This at least is suggested by Philo of Byblos, who relates that Chusor, the Phoenician descendant of Kothar, ‘cultivated poetry and spells and prophecy’.³⁵

³² For Shulgi and chordophones, see especially Krispijn 1990, *passim*. Shulgi as student of music and prophecy: Shulgi B 130-150, 155-177: see Sjöberg 1975:168-170 and n. 39.

³³ Sumerian proverb, Gordon 1959, 1.70. For the river ordeal, *Nanshe Hymn* 130 ff. (cf. n. 62), quotation trans. Heimpel 1981, and see 114 f.; Jacobsen 1987:135.

³⁴ For astragalomancy at Paphos, see Cultraro (forthcoming).

³⁵ Philo of Byblos *FGrH* 790 F 2: λόγους ἀσκήσαι καὶ ἐπιδᾶς καὶ μαντείας. Morris 1992:88 questions the relevance of this description to Kothar, suggesting that it may be based on no more than Sanchuniathon’s reading of a passage from the Baal epic; but it is at least as probable that he had recourse to Kothar/Chusor episodes which do not survive. For Chusor as Kothar, Brown 1965:201 f. and

Here the local scribal equation of Kothar with Ea, Mesopotamian patron of both music and prophecy, has not been given sufficient weight. In one Ugaritic text, the *knr* is listed first among an ensemble of instruments which seem to be described as the ‘beloved companions’ of Kothar (and so personified); another describes a feast scene where Kothar delights in the *knr* and other instruments, ‘singing sweetly along’.³⁶

The Greek Evidence

This affectionate relationship between Kothar and the *knr* provides a convenient transition to a consideration of the Greek reflexes of the divinized lyre. There is an intriguing linguistic chiasmus in the *knr* of Kothar, on the one hand, and the *kitharis* of Kinyras on the other; and the derivation of *kitharis* from the same root as Kothar would provide an attractive Semitic origin for this otherwise elusive word. But because this etymology depends upon such a neat inversion—with the names of God and Instrument changing places with respect to the radicals—it was rejected as too good to be true by J.P. Brown in 1965; and he has been followed by Sarah Morris in *Daidalos*.³⁷ But Brown wrote without knowledge of the Ugaritic

further literature in 202 n. 1. For Kothar as Ea, RS 20.24 + 1929 no. 17, line 15: see Nougayrol 1968:45, 51; cf. Lichtenstein 1972:104 n. 57, 110; Morris 1992:87.

³⁶ RS 24.252, 3-5; KTU 1.108, 5-8; see Nougayrol et al. 1968:553; Margalit 1989:438 (the quotation follows a restoration, but the sense is clear). Morris 1992:79-90, in her discussion of Kothar, the Kotharat goddesses (*ktr*), and other derivatives of *ktr*, unduly downplays the possible connections with music. Because the common ground of all is probably something like ‘skillful’ (Lichtenstein 1972; Brown 1965, 215 f.; cf. van Selms 1979), we may easily allow the Kotharat to preside over childbirth without rejecting them as singers, ‘daughters of joyful noise’ (*bnt hll*, cf. Ginsberg 1938, 13 f.; Nougayrol 1968:51). Their description in Aqhat as swallows (*snmt*) calls to mind Hom. *Od.* 21.406-411, where the traditional pairing (cf. n. 42) of lyre and bow (invented by Kothar in the *Tale of Aqhat*) is elaborated in detail. Note also their involvement with seven symbolism. Similarly, Kothar’s etymology as the ‘Clever God’ naturally authorizes him to preside over music as well as craftsmanship. Music as craftsmanship is a common idea in Greece, and known from Mesopotamia in the application of carpentry language, Akk. *pitnu*, to musical tunings: cf. Franklin 2002b:677. Thus the interpretation of the instruments in RS 24.252 as ‘companions of Kothar’ seems quite defensible.

³⁷ For *kitharis* < *ktr*, Ginsberg 1938:13; Nougayrol 1968:51, 59. Morris (1992, 79 f. n. 26) seems to imply that “the connection once argued between Kinyras . . . and κίθαρις” was one of direct etymology; the connection actually mooted by Brown 1965 was between *ktr* and *kitharis*, which he considered very attractive in itself, but reluctantly rejected because it led to the chiastic parallelism of Kothar-

pantheon text, which had only just then come to light. I would argue that this evidence justifies the linguistic confusion, since the lyre's divine personification entails just such an ambiguity between god and instrument. The *knr*, once divinized, becomes itself a god, Kinyras, while its status as Kothar's favorite—and note that it is the only divinized instrument in the pantheon—allows it to become a *kitharis*, the 'Kothar instrument' *par excellence*. This inversion also seems reflected in the local Cypriot versions of the Phoenician symposium bowls considered above. Here the stereotyped iconography is mostly the same, but in musical scenes the West Semitic instruments are replaced by Aegean lyres with their characteristic round base—an exchange of *kinnôr* for *kitharis*.

Turning now to Greece itself, there is no lack of evidence in Classical and post-Classical sources for the attribution of metaphysical properties to the lyre. Most familiar perhaps is the doctrine of the Harmony of the Spheres, variously elaborated in the Pythagorean tradition (Richter 1999; Hagel 2005b), in which the tuning (*harmonia*) of the lyre was seen as a microcosm of a universal Harmony; in turn the human body and soul were, like the tuning of the lyre, material echoes of this. But the value of any Pythagorean material (in the broadest sense, which includes Plato) for understanding the state of affairs before Pythagoras is very difficult to assess, since the lore of the lyre was profoundly modulated by the discovery of, or exposure to, the musical ratios in the late sixth century. On the other hand, the musical researches of Pythagoras(?), Lasus, and Hippasus presuppose a fascination with the acoustic phenomena.³⁸ This urge may equally be seen as a form of divination, an examination of the instrument for what it reveals about 'the divine'. *A priori*, then, the antiquity of Greek *musica speculativa* cannot be limited to the age of Pythagoras. Thus Greek mythology places Orpheus in the heroic age, when the Thracian singer used

kitharis/Kinyras-*knr*; but this was before the discovery of the deified *knr* in the pantheon text, which justifies the semantic exchange (see below).

³⁸ Lasus of Hermione and Hippasus of Metapontum certainly devised experiments to illustrate the ratios in the late sixth or early fifth centuries (Aristox. fr. 90; schol. Pl. *Phd.* 108d4; Lasus: Theo Sm. 59.4 ff. Cf. Burkert 1972:375-378 and n. 33; Barker 1984-1989:2.31 n. 11). For Plato's influence on Pythagoreanism, and vice versa, Burkert 1972. Despite my best attempts to follow the work of Ernest McClain 1976, etc., there appears to me still no conclusive evidence for the musical ratios in cuneiform sources—although I would hardly be surprised if it emerges. Regardless, Greek discovery of/exposure to the ratios may be quite securely dated to the time of Pythagoras or shortly thereafter, thanks to the evidence for Lasus and Hippasus.

his lyre to charm animals, vegetables and minerals (Kern 1922:14-16). The same motif may well be illustrated in second millennium finds from southern Anatolia and Canaan, some going back to c.1800 B.C., which show lyrists in the company of animals; if so, the direction of influence (if any) is unclear.³⁹ Although this evidence is so much earlier than that for Orpheus, it is paralleled by the high antiquity of the heptatonic system itself. That Orpheus could use his lyre to overcome the death of Eurydice might recall the sacred marriage, with a gender inversion of Inanna's descent to the underworld.

This power for Order takes on a political dimension in the myth of Amphion, who built seven-gated Thebes by using his seven-stringed lyre to assemble the cyclopean masonry. Another lyre construction myth is found at Megara (Paus. 1.42.1-2). Burkert has argued that the myth of the Seven Against Thebes echoes a Mesopotamian purification/foundation ritual, whereby seven gods who must battle and defeat seven demons to establish the Babylon, and by extension an orderly cosmos. Aristotle attests that the Pythagoreans took the seven strings of the lyre, and the seven heroes of the seven Theban gates, the seven Pleiades, and so on, as parallel manifestations of some causative force inherent in the number seven; and here we should note that the Seven Gods of Babylonian tradition were also identified with the Pleiades.⁴⁰

In the alternative Theban *ktisis*, Cadmus founds the city following oracular instructions from Delphi, and through his marriage to

³⁹ Three images in particular may be cited: 1) Syro-Hittite Cylinder seal impression, New York Public Library. 1900-1700 B.C. Ward 1910:301 no. 939a; cf. Porada 1956, fig. g. 2) Syrian steatite cylinder seal impression from Tarsus (Inv. 999-S7): Goldman 1956:400 fig. 35; cf. 235, 394. For the corrected dating to c.1800 (from c.1200, Porada 1956), see Collon 1987:43; cf. Lawergren 1998:47, also pointing out that the depiction may not be precise enough to identify this instrument as round-bottomed and Aegean (for which, Porada [1956], 204). 3) 'Orpheus jug' from Megiddo, c.1200-1100 B.C.: Loud 1936. Dothan 1982:152, takes to be Philistine on the basis of the Orpheus parallel, but takes no account of the instrument's shape, which is clearly West Semitic, not Aegean. Lawergren 1998:53, rejects a Philistine provenance on the basis of the southern Anatolian parallels of figures 1 and 2, which he dissociates from the Aegean. In fact, for these the direction of influence is unclear, both for instrument morphology and animal motif—although they might be useful evidence for the question of Minoan identity.

⁴⁰ For Amphion, Rocchi 1989:47-57. For the 'Seven Against Thebes', Burkert 1981; cf. Burkert 1992 < 1984:63, 112 f., 189 n. 44, with further examples of 'seven magic'. Pythagorean sevens: Arist. *Metaph.* 1093a3 ff. For the 'seven gods' of Mesopotamian tradition (Akk. *sebittu*), see Black/Green 1992, s.v. and further below.

Harmonia establishes civic order. This might be taken as an Aegean version of the *hieros gamos*, albeit with a distinctly non-Greek orientation. A Semitic etymology makes Cadmus ‘the Easterner’ (< *qdm*). Moreover one important tradition, preserved in a Pythagorean source, states that ‘the Achaeans received the [sc. seven-stringed] lyre from Cadmus’, thus revealing him as another kind of lyre-king.⁴¹ Harmonia’s cosmological significance is very ancient, and perhaps ultimately Indo-European; and while harmony as a general concept is certainly primary, a special connection with music must have developed very early, perhaps even in the Mycenaean period, judging from the phonology of *harmonia*.⁴² But the identification of the Theban goddess with Aphrodite Ourania in the Derveni Papyrus points to a secondary reformulation in light of eastern learning, as does the Hesiodic genealogy of Harmonia as the daughter of Ares and Aphrodite, the union of love and war in a single figure recalling Astarte/Ishtar.⁴³ Thus Cadmus and Harmonia join Amphion and the Seven to attest connections between lyre music, eastern learning, the mythical foundation of Thebes according to some definite ritual procedure with Mesopotamian affinities, and the city’s status as a microcosm of universal Order.⁴⁴

⁴¹ For Cadmus and Harmonia, Vian 1963:21-34; Rocchi 1989 for the myth as a whole. For Cadmus < *qdm*: Astour 1967:152 ff.; Edwards 1979:144 ff.; West 1997:449; Berman 2004:16. Cadmus and the seven-stringed lyre: Nic. *Exc.* 1 (Jan 266); this lyre catalogue has all the marks of fifth-century logographic rationalization. The repudiation of Terpander as the lyre’s inventor is also found in the *sphragis* of Timotheus’ *Persians* (PMG 791.221-233). In all likelihood, then, the Cadmeian lyre tradition of ‘Nicomachus’ has a solid Archaic pedigree.

⁴² For the possible Indo-European background of *harmonia*, see Franklin 2002c. The word is not certainly attested in the sense ‘tuning, scale’ before Lasus of Hermione (PMG 702) in the late sixth century, although it may well be hidden in Sapph. fr. 70.9-11 (Voigt); cf. Franklin 2003:302 n. 11. But ἀραρίσκω appears in a musical sense already in Hom. *h. Ap.* 164, and there is an implicit musicality in the lyre’s exemplification, along with the bow, of ἄρμονία, which is already established as traditional in epic (*Od.* 21.406-411; *h. Ap.* 131, *h. Merc.* 515; cf. Heraclit. 22 B 51 D-K; cf. Franklin 2002c:2-5; 2003:298-300). Finally, note the probable Mycenaean antiquity of the word itself, given the vocalization of the sonant nasal as *o* and not *a*: Ruijgh 1961:204-206; Franklin 2002c:17-18.

⁴³ Hes. *Th.* 933-937; *P.Derv.* 21.5 ff. (see Laks/Most 1997:9). For Harmonia’s assimilation to Aphrodite Ourania, see also Hes. *Th.* 975 (with comments of West 1966, ad loc.); Aesch. *Su.* 1039-1043; E. *Ph.* 7-9; Arist. fr. 24 (Rose); Call. fr. 654; Paus. 9.16.3-4; Theo Sm. 12.19-20.

⁴⁴ To what degree the myths influenced each other on this point is not clear. Berman 2004 has argued that the foundation narratives enjoyed an independent existence until the fifth century, when they were fused in various ways by the mythographers.

The Cadmus myth is of particular importance for involving Delphi, given the oracle's active role in Archaic city foundations, and that in other respects Apollo's seat seems to have been an epicenter for the collection and redistribution of Babylonian lore in the Orientalizing period.⁴⁵ Delphi also seems to have hosted an active program of seven-numerology. It was here that the wisdom of the seven sages—all seventeen of them (Martin 1993:109)—was catalogued. In the *Seven Against Thebes*, Aeschylus gives Apollo a cult title, or pseudo-cult title, 'Leader of Sevens' (*hebdomagêtas*, 800 f.). Plutarch, himself a Delphic priest, attests that 'the sacred seven of Apollo' was a favorite topic of speculation among tourists, and that one could 'use up the whole day before exhausting in speech all its powers' (Plut. *De E Delph.* 391f).

Although the Orpheus, Amphion and Cadmus myths are set in the Bronze Age, they are of course best attested only much later, mostly in Classical and post-Classical sources. Moreover, despite the evidence for sacred activity in the Bronze Age, Delphi's *commanding* religious role is certainly post-Mycenaean (Snodgrass 1980:55 f.; Morgan 1990:126 ff.). Is it safe to infer, then, that these music-cosmology traditions genuinely descend from the earlier period? Or do none of the details predate the Orientalizing period, or even the time of Pythagoras? I believe that scattered hints from the Archaic period do indeed support a deeper foundation. First of course are the Mycenaean seven-stringed instruments shown earlier, the necessary, if not sufficient, prerequisite. Hesiod is said to have written a poem about how Amphion 'founded Thebes to be seven-gated', and although this attribution was sometimes doubted in antiquity, there is no reason to suppose that the poem was not a genuine product of the Archaic period. Indeed, Hesiodic authorship would only be plausible if the work was from a singer of the Boeotian school, so that the theme has a chance of reflecting local Theban tradition of Mycenaean antiquity; and here we should note that a Linear B tablet from Thebes now attests that lyre-players were a formal part of the palace personnel.⁴⁶ Homer, too, knew of

⁴⁵ Cf. Burkert 1985 < 1977:81, 227; Burkert 1992:56, 63, 81, 186 n. 2, 196 n. 12 with further literature.

⁴⁶ Hes. fr. 182, 183 (M-W). My quote (ἐπταπύλους τὰς Θήβας ᾠκοδόμησεν), which comes from Nic. *Exc.* 1, may be an unrecognized fragment (and not quite a complete hexameter) of the poem: cf. Franklin 2003:302 f. For the dual *ru-ra-ta* (< *lyra*) in the new Theban tablet, see Aravantinos 1996. The great surprise here is the early use of *lyra*, formerly not known until the seventh century ([Hom.]

Amphion's founding of seven-gated Thebes, and though he does not mention the lyre, the burden of proof must be on those who would see the musical dimension of the myth as a secondary development (*Od.* 9.260-265).

The most positive sign of pre-Pythagorean origins in these myths is the absence of any hint of the Pythagorean musical ratios, and the importance placed on the number seven. This links them to an ubiquitous Near Eastern pattern, well represented in the Old Testament, Ugaritic and Mesopotamian sources; and this in turn supports the viability of a Mycenaean origin for at least some of the Greek material. Nowhere is seven-numerology connected exclusively with music, appearing for instance in other civic order legends where the lyre or harp has no role, from Persia, Assyria, Jericho and Rome. There were seven conspirators, including Darius, who usurped power to re-establish Order in the Persian Empire—as though the older Babylonian myth was hijacked for propaganda purposes (*Hdt.* 3.70-88). Sargon invoked the Seven Gods (*Akk. sebittu*) on a stele erected on Cyprus, to celebrate the defeat of the Seven Kings of the island—clearly a contrived number,⁴⁷ but conforming to the pattern of Seven versus Seven. In negative form, Jericho was destroyed when the Hebrew army was led seven times around the city walls by seven priests bearing seven trumpets on the seventh day (*Josh.* 6.3-20); and of course seven numerology looms large in the book of Revelation. The pattern probably also appears in the foundation of Rome, when Etruscan priests gathered seven symbolic hills within a single perimeter; for the precise identity of the *montes* is as problematic as that of the seven Greek sages.⁴⁸ A *ritus Etruscus* for the founding of cities, brought

Marg. fr. 1.3 [West]; *Archil.* fr. 54.11, 93a.5 [West]; *Alcm.* 140 *PMGF* (*kerkolyra*); *Sapph.* fr. 44.33, 103.9, 208 [Voigt]; *Alc.* fr. 307c [Voigt]; *Stesich.* 278.2 *PMGF*. Moreover, we must assume a generic sense, since the players in question surely used the costly instruments depicted in Minoan and Mycenaean wall paintings rather than the tortoise-shell variety associated with the word from the *Hymn to Hermes* onwards.

⁴⁷ Reyes 1995:24, 51, with further literature. For the relevant texts, Pritchard 1950:284 f.

⁴⁸ Note especially Verg. *Georg.* 533-535: *sic fortis Etruria crevit / scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma, / septemque una sibi muro circumdedit arces* ('Thus, to be sure, Etruria grew strong, and Rome was made the most beautiful of things, and as a single city embraced her seven citadels within a wall). Vergil may have drawn inspiration from Greek poetic prototypes, perhaps especially concerning Thebes; and note the Lucretian cosmological resonance of *rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma*. But the close connection with Etruria is significant: the explicit Roman

from Mesopotamia during the Orientalizing period, would be closely paralleled by the imported art of hepatoscopy—an ‘exact science’ requiring detailed liver models and Akkadian technical terminology.⁴⁹

But once this seven numerology had become established, as it did at a very early date, it would be natural—even unavoidable, given the Mesopotamian mind-set—for the lyre and its heptatonic tunings to become assimilated, and for ‘magical seven’ to appear in musical contexts (incidentally this is the hierarchy imagined by Aristotle in the passage cited above). Two Sumerian texts may be cited which seem to illustrate this. One tablet records offerings of ‘seven litres of oil and seven litres of dates for the seven *balags*’ (TSA 1.ix.12-14). In the *Curse of Agade*, ‘musical seven’ is connected with the theme of the ordered/disordered city. During the prosperity of Agade, ‘the heart of the city was of *tigi*-harps’; but when the hybris of its king, Naramsin, causes Enlil to destroy Agade, and its survivors try to appease the god, the chief lamentation singer ‘for seven days and seven nights, put in place seven *balags*, like the firm base of heaven’.⁵⁰ It is an easy inference that the heptatonic tunings of the instruments in question were also considered to manifest the power of ‘sacred seven’. The second passage especially is suggestive of a ritual prototype for the mythical activities of Amphion, Cadmus and Orpheus.

Moving from Greek myth to history we find that, as in the Near East, ‘magical seven’ and music-cosmology were not confined to poetic flights of fancy. It was recently discovered, for instance, that the post-Gelan refoundation of Camarina in Sicily used the order of strings on the lyre as a pattern for administrative divisions. The date (c.465) is too early for the influence of Damonian or Platonic philosophy; it exemplifies rather an Archaic procedure. There seems

acknowledgement of Etruscan foundation rituals for their own cities, beginning from Rome itself (Var., *L.L.* 5.143; D.H. 1.228; Plut. *Rom.* 11), encourages us to take the three clauses as logically dependent, so that the ‘seven-founding’ of Rome becomes a product of the Etruscan golden age. The plowing with oxen in the Cadmus myth is clearly a parallel, not a prototype, for the Roman procedure.

⁴⁹ For Etruscan hepatoscopy on a Babylonian model, cf. Burkert 1992:46-51; West 1997:48.

⁵⁰ *Curse of Agade*, 34 ff.; 196-204. Translation after Cooper 1983 and Jacobsen 1987. For music as symbolic of Agade’s prosperity, Cooper 1983:38 f.; 238, 252. So too the loss of music (including harps) marks destroyed condition of Isin in *The Destroyed House* (CT XXXVI. 17-24, trans. Jacobsen 1987:475-477).

to have been a similar organization at Tenos.⁵¹ Perhaps it was believed that a lyre-founded city would gain metaphysical protection and enjoy social unity, again through sympathetic magic; we should recall that the foundation of an ancient city typically required special rituals of protective magic. The lyre could also be used to restore a shaken civic Order, as seen from the traditions that Terpander, Alcman, Thaletas of Crete, and Tyrtaeus all performed rituals of social catharsis in Sparta (and note that Camarina was a *refoundation*). It is noteworthy that Terpander's purification is described in one source as a 'mystic song' on a 'mysteries-conducting lyre', as though he had access to some form of secret lore which required his own ritual initiation, and was in turn required for the successful execution of his musical purifications.)⁵² Moreover, the command of the Delphic oracle to the Spartans was apparently only that they summon or hearken to 'The Lesbian Singer'—as though other citharodes from the island might also have been capable of the deed. In fact Arion, Terpander's successor in the Lesbian school, is said to have performed musical catharses among the Lesbians and Ionians, as had Terpander himself.⁵³ Here we must entertain the notion that the Lesbians preserved a wisdom tradition inherited from the Achaean palaces, recalling the myth that the head or lyre of Orpheus washed to Aeolian Lesbos, where fishermen brought it to Terpander. Similarly, literary sources, beginning with the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo*, allege a special connection between Crete and Delphi, including Apollo's priests with their paians, the healers Thaletas and Epimenides, and Sparta's Lycurgan

⁵¹ Camarina: Cordano 1994; cf. Wilson 2004:280. Tenos: Etienne 1990:70 f. (here the word *tonos* was used).

⁵² Pratin. fr. 6 (*PMG* 713.3); Diog. Bab. Fr. 84 *SVF* 3.232; Philodem. *Mus.* 1.30.31-35 (Kemke); Plut. *Agis* 799f; ps.-Plut. *de Mus.* 1134b, 1146bc; Ael. *VH* 12.50; Boeth. *De inst. Mus.* 1.1; cf. Burkert 1992 < 1984:42; Gostoli 1988; Franklin 2002c:16, 20. For the 'mysterious lyre', *Anth. Pal.* 2.111-116 (Christod. Ecphrasis): μύστιδα μολπήν . . . μυστιπύλω φόρμυγι.

⁵³ Dem. Phal. ap. Schol. E, Q ad *Od.* 3.267 (144.8 Dindorf). The same might be suggested by 'after a Lesbian singer', proverbial for taking second place: Cratin. fr. 263 K-A (= Phot. *Lex.* s.v. μετὰ Λέσβιον ᾠδόν); Arist. fr. 545 (Rose); Plut. *De sera num. vind.* 558a; Zen. 5.9 (1.118 Leutsch/Schneidewin); Hsch. s.v. Λέσβιος ᾠδός and μετὰ Λέσβιον ᾠδόν; *Suda* s.v. μετὰ Λέσβιον ᾠδόν; cf. Ael. Dion. λ 7. Crucial is the evidence of Sappho—'outstanding, as when the Lesbian singer [sc. is among] whomsoever else' (πέρροχος, ὥς ὅτ' ᾠοῖδος ὁ Λέσβιος ἀλλοδόποισιν, fr. 106 [Voigt])—which is best read generically: would a native Lesbian refer to a fellow countryman as 'the Lesbian'? For Arion, Boeth. *De inst. Mus.* 1.1 (185.16 ff.).

constitution.⁵⁴ It as though the Archaic Navel of Greece were gathering to itself local vestiges of Bronze Age wisdom alongside contemporary Babylonian learning. It may be important that, during a crisis in the Cyrene foundation (see below), the oracle recommended the colonists to enlist the services of a ‘purification priest’ from Mantinea in Arcadia; again the command was generic, and it was only after formal application that the Mantineans sent a certain Demonax (Hdt. 4.161).

That these ritual appointments were arranged by Delphi—as was the purification of Athens from the Cylonian affair by the poet Epimenides—accords well with its pan-Hellenic involvement in the ordering of Archaic society. Moreover, such tales attest a material basis for the interconnection of prophecy, lyre music and purification which constitute the full domain (less the bow, the lyre’s ‘harmonic’ twin) of Apollo as the ‘overseer of harmony’ (as Plato puts it); figures like Orpheus and Cheiron are interesting doublets.⁵⁵ Delphi’s issuing of oracular instructions for the proper foundation of cities was, of course, not limited to myths like that of Cadmus. The Thera colonial foundation of Cyrene is especially noteworthy for its complex and repeated negotiations with the oracle; and as related by Herodotus (4.149-159), there is an element of seven-numerology (although no mention music). Seven years of drought afflicted the Theraeans before they finally obeyed the Delphic decree, and Thera is said to have been divided into seven districts, from which the future colonists were to be recruited. It may be significant that Herodotus calls Theras, the mythical founder of Thera, a Cadmeian, and states that an enclave of Phoenicians lived on the island (4.147-153). I know of no historical source which explicitly connects a Delphi-directed foundation with lyre ritual. But given the instrument’s dominant connection with Apollo, it is easy to imagine this behind the structuring of Camarina and Tenos. It is surely more economical to suppose that the musical foundations of the Theban cycle reflect some ritual reality, than that the attested Archaic practices were solely inspired by the rediscovery of the epic past which was then

⁵⁴ Orpheus on Lesbos, Myrsilus ap. Antigon. Caryst. *Hist. Mirab.* 5; Nic. *Exc.* 1. Crete and Delphi: Hom. *h. Ap.* 388-544; cf. Burkert 1992:60, 63. Even if the connection with Crete was exaggerated (cf. Defradas 1954:55 f.), it need not have been completely contrived.

⁵⁵ Pl. *Cra.* 404e-405d; cf. Pi. *Pyth.* 8.67 f.; Call. *Ap.* 42-46; D. S. 5.74.5; Franklin 2002c:2, 19.

current; for this would still leave unexplained the presence of such motifs in the poetic tradition.

It is appropriate that the earliest Greek authority for the lyre as an instrument of divination is the Homeric *Hymn to Hermes*. The poem probably reached its present form in the late Archaic period, but note that the scene is set in Arcadia, a stronghold of Achaean culture, where Hermes survived from the Mycenaean pantheon (whereas Apollo is not attested in Linear B). This, as well as the very nature of the epic tradition, lets us imagine that the motif of the magical lyre is indeed much older, as the Orpheus, Amphion and Cadmus myths all suggest. The poem recounts the birth of Hermes, his prodigious creative powers, and his sibling rivalry with Apollo over the right to prophecy and the theft of his brother's sacred cattle, two of which Hermes has sacrificed; he atones for this crime by handing over the newly invented seven-stringed lyre. The creation of this instrument, which involves the killing of the tortoise, is itself an act of sacrifice, and so a prophetic note is sounded by association with the arts of hepatoscopy and extispicy. The same suggestion of divinatory powers emerges from the poem's occasional personification of the lyre. When the poet says 'Hermes was first to make the tortoise a Singer' (25), he authorizes a transfer of powers from the *aidos* to the instrument itself. Thus the lyre has the 'godly singing' (*thespin aoidên*, 442) which is usually a trait of the inspired bard, the 'godly singer' (*theios aoidos*). It is also referred to as a new Muse (*tis Mousa*, 447), so that, like the other 'Muses who possess Olympian homes', the lyre becomes a dispenser of divine knowledge.⁵⁶ It is no longer the singer who is, in the words of Demetrius of Phaleron, a 'teacher of matters human and divine' to the audience, but the *lyre* who so instructs the *singer* (fr. 191 Wehrli). In a crucial passage, Hermes explains to Apollo (482-488):

Whoever inquires of it,
Having mastered it with skill and wisdom,
To him it teaches (*didaskai*) with its utterance all manner of things
pleasing to the mind,

⁵⁶ At 443-445 the poet says of the new lyre that no mortal has yet heard its voice, 'nor any of the immortals who possess Olympian homes' (οὔτε τι ν' ἀθανάτων οἱ Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσι, 445). This recalls the epic invocational formula quoted in my text (Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσιν), which was used by a poet about to tap the stores of bardic and divine memory. See Janko 1992 ad Hom. *Il.* 16.112 f.; cf. *Il.* 2.484, 11.218, 14.508, 16.112; Hes. *Th.* 114 f.; fr. 1.1 f. (M-W).

Being easily played with gentle habituation,
 Shunning long-suffering labour. But whoever in
 Ignorance enquires of it roughly and abruptly,
 Then would it babble quite hopelessly and without foundation.

These verses are echoed soon afterwards in Apollo's description of his own prophetic powers, where again there is emphasis on proper knowledge and method, alluding this time to the sacrificial protocol which must be followed if a truthful oracle is to be obtained at Delphi (543-549):

Whoever comes by the cry and flight of meaningful birds;
 This man shall profit with my oracular voice, and I shall not deceive
 him.
 But whoever, after trusting to idle-babbling birds,
 Wishes to enquire of my prophecy against
 Our will, and to know more than the everlasting gods,
 I declare he'll follow a wild-goose chase—though I would *take* his gifts.

Thematically the two passages are parallel, and contain a significant number of verbal and metrical echoes.⁵⁷ The poet thus wished to establish some kind of equivalence between the musical expressions of the lyre and the oracular utterances of Apollo. This leads to a more satisfactory reading of the poem, clarifying the complex negotiation of allotment which cements the brother's friendship at the end. Because a gift exchange must be reciprocal, Apollo is obliged to concede limited mantic powers to Hermes in order to acquire the prophetic lyre (550-573). Thus, like the Sumerian *balag*, the Greek lyre is treated as both a singer of godly voice and a divine 'counsellor' or 'teacher'.

Conclusion

Obviously the themes considered here were elaborated, in the Near East, by the temple and palace singers themselves, who may have seen the Lyre God as a sort of professional *alter ego*. Still more perhaps in Greece were singers free to glorify themselves as they saw fit, their own 'famous deeds' living on in song alongside those of their patrons. We are dealing then with various aspects of a common 'micrometaculture', one which parallels a koine of cultic, poetic

⁵⁷ Note especially 482 f. ὅς τις ἄν . . . ἐξερεΐνῃ and 543 ὅς τις ἄν ἔλθῃ, with ἐξερεΐνῃ in 547, 488 μάψ and 546 μαπιλόγοισι. But it is the parallel rhetorical structure which is most remarkable.

and musical practice—hence vestiges of a quasi-technical repertoire. I would assert, then, that the society of musicians associated with the seven-stringed lyre in Greek mythology—Amphion, Orpheus, Cadmus and probably both Linus and Thamyris—*do* preserve a core of ‘music-cosmology’ deriving from the palatial period—even if they also later received post-Pythagorean accretions. Perhaps the Minoans were as much responsible for passing such ideas on to the Mycenaeans as the Hittites, Hurrians or Canaanites. But for this we have even less evidence than there is for Egypt.

I shall close with one further aspect of the Lyre Gods which is particularly relevant to the musical koine. This is the divinization of the central string. In the Babylonian version of the Sumerian nomenclature, the fourth of seven unique strings was labelled Ea-Made-It, after the craftsman god who was also patron of musical arts.⁵⁸ In Ugarit the same conception might lurk behind the divine *knr* and its connection with Kothar, Ea’s Canaanite counterpart. As we have seen, the seven-stringed lyre is presented as a Muse in the Homeric *Hymn to Hermes*, where it is again connected with an inventor god. At Delphi, the central string *mesê* itself, along with the outer strings *nêtê* and *hypatê*, was deified as a Muse.⁵⁹

This was surely one of the many dimensions of the ‘sacred hebdomad of Apollo’ mentioned by Plutarch, an *omphalos* of musical cosmology at the Navel of the World. It may even be this which explains Apollo’s Aeschylean epithet ‘Leader of Seven’ (*hebdomagêtas*, see above). A number of musciographical sources describe the role of the central string as ‘leader’ (*archê*, *hêgemôn*).⁶⁰ The equation of *mesê* with the Sun or Central Fire in Pythagorean tradition is probably also relevant.

⁵⁸ This is seen in U. 3011, CBS 10996, UET VII/74: for the texts, see n. 1.

⁵⁹ Plut. *Quaest. conviv.* 744c, 745b; cf. *SEG* 30.382; ps.-Censor. *de Mus.* 6.610.1 f. The inclusion of the outer strings only serves to emphasize the epicentric structure; this reductive ‘trichordal’ conception of the heptachord appears especially from Plato’s tripartition of the just soul, when he identifies these strings as ‘the three boundaries of tuning’ (ὅρους τρεῖς ἀρμονίας ἀτεχνῶς νήτης τε καὶ ὑπάτης καὶ μέσης, *Rep.* 4.443d), and makes only passing allusion to ‘whatever else happens to be between them’ (καὶ εἰ ἄλλα ἅττα μεταξὺ τυγχάνει ὄντα). Cf. Plut. *Plat. quaest.* 1007e-1009b.

⁶⁰ For *hebdomagêtas* as an Aeschylean coinage, Berman 2004:9 n. 24. For *mesê* as ‘leader’: Arist. *Ph.* 8.8.262a25 (ἀρχή?); *Metaph.* 4.1018b26 ff. (ἀρχή); *Pol.* 1.2.1254a28-33 (ἀρχή?); ps.-Arist. *Pr.* 19.33 (ἡγεμών), although this relates rather to a later left-right, rather than epicentric, conception of *harmonia*; 19.44 (ἀρχή); ps.-Plut. *De mus.* 1135a (ἡγεμών).

Excursus: Musical Prophecy in The Old Testament

A few key pieces of evidence from the Old Testament may be observed as part of the larger Canaanite/West Semitic musical world. Here music and prophecy are frequently linked.⁶¹ This is not exclusively connected with the lyre: often a whole ensemble of lyres, pipes and hand percussion is described as ‘prophesying’. But it is certain that the *kinnôr* held a chief position among the Hebrews, and it is probable that most of the Levitical singers could play the instrument (Sendrey 1969:424). These ‘Sons of Levi’ offer a linguistic and professional parallel to the Kinyradai and Ugaritic guilds. I Chronicles (25:3) mentions David’s appointment of the sons of Jeduthun who ‘prophesied with a harp (i.e. *kinnôr*), to give thanks and to praise the Lord’. Here ‘prophesy’ might seem to cover a range of musical activity beyond the oracular, including praise poetry and perhaps the interpretation of sacred songs. Similarly, David appoints, ‘to lift up the horn’, the sons of Heman, ‘the king’s seer in the words of God’ (I Chron. 25:4-5), as though prophecy involved some form of musical exegesis of extant repertoire; and this recalls the office of the *sanga*, known from Sumerian and Hittite texts, whose job was ‘to let the holy song and her (Nanshe’s) thoughts shine’.⁶² Yet elsewhere in the Old Testament this function is not sharply separated from prophecy, where it is precisely praise songs, properly executed, which bring about miraculous results. Thus Jehoshaphat, King of Judah, having received the Lord’s word, via the prophet Jahaziel, that he would be victorious against the Moabites and Ammonites, ‘appointed singers unto the Lord . . . and when they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushments against the children of Ammon, Moab, and mount Seir’ (2 Chron. 20:14-23).

⁶¹ Cf. Exod. 15:20 f.; Deuter. 31:19-22 (of Moses); 1 Sam. 19:20-24; 1 Chron. 25:1 (‘Moreover David and the captains of the host separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries and with cymbals’), with 1 Chron. 15:16-24 (David’s appointment of musicians from the Levites) and 25:3-6; 2 Chron. 5:12, 20:21-23. Musical prophecy may be implicit at 1 Sam 19:20-24; Ps. 49:2-5 (where the *kinnôr* is probably assumed); Ezek. 40:44-46. See generally Galpin 1936:52; Sendrey 1969:481-489, 507-515; Shiloah 1993:58 f.

⁶² *Nanshe Hymn* (Ur III period), 121, trans. Heimpel 1981, q.v. 114 (ad 121 f.): ‘the Sanga is apparently required to know and let be known the wishes of Nanshe by understanding her nature as revealed in holy songs and concealed in her thoughts’. Cf. Kilmer in *RLA* 8, 469b. For the office in Hittite temple music, de Martino in *RLA* 8, 483b.

Here apparently praise music was required to cause the foretold event to come to fruition.

The idea of a 'prophecy-in-performance', governed perhaps by laws of oral composition at this early stage, emerges most clearly from the episode in 2 Kings (3:13-20) which relates the campaign of Jehoram against the Moabites, when the united army of Israel, Judah and Edom was stranded in the wilderness without water. This was seen as a divine ordinance, and the prophet Elisha was summoned to enquire the Lord's purpose. "Now bring me a minstrel", Elisha ordered. 'And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him; and he said, "Thus saith the Lord, Make this valley full of ditches"'. This is again the idea of the Amphion and Orpheus myths, that music can bring Order to a disordered natural world; but here it is explicitly stated that this was accomplished through consultation of divine will. The opposite effect, that of bringing disorder, is seen in the Jehoshaphat episode mentioned above, where the 'ambushments' of the Lord cause the Moabites and Ammonites to slay each other, rather than the Judaeans (2 Chron. 20:23).

Finally, consider the words of Samuel to Saul (describing the basic ancient ensemble): 'thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a timbrel, and a pipe, and a harp (i.e. *kinnôr*), before them; and they shall prophesy. And the spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man' (1 Sam. 10.5-6). Of interest here is the exercise of prophecy by a (soon to be) royal and musical personage, recalling Kinyras and Shulgi of Ur (for whom see below). There is also the power for personal transformation which is familiar from the Greek lyre tradition, in the myth of Orpheus and legends of Pythagoras. This appears again in the well-known passage of 1 Samuel (16:23) as a sort of exorcism: David, 'when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul . . . took an harp (*kinnôr*), and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him'. Once again, as with Kinyras, Shulgi, Amphion and Achilles, the lyre is seen as a Kingly virtue; the only difference with the pronouncement of Demetrius of Phaleron (see above) is in the varying form of government, monarchy and *polis*, to which the lyre pertained. It is also noteworthy that for Shulgi, Achilles, and David, the instrument is associated with their youth. Compare the Greek tradition that Polycrates, tyrant of Samos in the sixth century,

employed as tutor for his son the poet Anacreon, 'under whom the child strove for kingly virtue by means of the lyre' (Him. *Or.* 29.22). These tales illustrate the very ancient basis for the ethical and educative precepts of Damon and Plato, which must merely have elaborated an attitude inherited from the Archaic élite, and ultimately, I would suggest, the Achaeon palaces.

The biblical passages are remarkable for their relatively precise practical descriptions of the 'science' of musical prophecy, specifying that music has transformative powers when combined with consultation of the divine will, and emphasizing the aspect of performance. In this they make a unique contribution to reconstructing a larger Near Eastern pattern—although naturally one cannot assume that musical prophecy worked in exactly the same way in every culture considered. But whatever powers the lyre may have possessed at various times and places, it must always have been exercised through actual music, which was the first and fundamental function of the instrument.

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